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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/704,171	11/01/2000	Jeffrey R. Aamodt	06576-105026 (MS#150515.1)	4207
25096	7590	06/01/2006	EXAMINER BASOM, BLAINE T	
PERKINS COIE LLP PATENT-SEA P.O. BOX 1247 SEATTLE, WA 98111-1247			ART UNIT 2173	PAPER NUMBER

DATE MAILED: 06/01/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/704,171	AAMODT ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Blaine Basom	2173	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 February 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 53-72 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 53-72 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

The Examiner acknowledges the Applicants' amendments to claims 53-58, 60, and 61, the Applicants' addition of new claims 62-72, and the Applicants' cancellation of claims 1-52. Regarding the pending claims, the Applicants assert that the "under budget threshold," "under budget graphical indicator," "over budget threshold," and "over budget graphical indicator" recited in each of these claims is not taught by any of the previously applied references. These arguments have been considered, but are moot in view of the following new grounds of rejection, which are required in response to the Applicants' amendments.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claim 62 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. The specification discloses receiving thresholds and graphical indicators for summary and non-summary data (see for example, page 12, line 28 – page 13, line 14). The specification, however, does not disclose or suggest that these thresholds and graphical indicators may be

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different for each task and subtask of a plurality of tasks and subtasks of a project, as is expressed in claim 62.

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 62, 63, and 64 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claim 62 recites the phrase, "when processing the cost field for each task and subtask," whereas claims 63 and 64 similarly recite, "when processing the cost field for a task." There is no recitation in these claims that such processing actually occurs however, and therefore, each of claims 62, 63, and 64 is considered indefinite.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 53-57, 61, and 63-69 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,349,315, which is attributed to Sonoyama et al. (hereafter referred to as "Sonoyama"), and also over U.S. Patent No. 5,704,028, which is attributed to Schanel et al.

(hereafter referred to as “Schanel”). In general, Sonoyama describes a “document output apparatus,” which is implemented to color the cells of a document, e.g. a spreadsheet, according to the data within each cell (for example, see column 1, line 65 – column 2, line 15).

Specifically regarding claim 63, Sonoyama discloses that such an apparatus: stores data for display within a plurality of fields, e.g. cells, of the document (for example, see column 3, lines 53-67; column 6, lines 20-32; and figure 6); receives from a user a display option indicating whether to display solely text data, or graphical indicators (i.e. specifically-colored fields) and text data for the fields (see column 8, lines 13-55; and column 4, line 63 – column 6, line 4); receives from the user various thresholds and associated graphical indicators (see column 8, lines 13-55; and column 4, line 63 – column 6, line 4); determines whether the display option indicates displaying graphical indicators and text or only text data for the fields of the document, such that when the display option indicates displaying only text data, the apparatus displays only text data for the fields (for example, see column 5, line 66 – column 6, line 4), and when the display option indicates displaying graphical indicators, the apparatus also displays graphical indicators according to the relationship between the data in each field and the received thresholds (for example, see column 4, line 63 – column 5, line 65; and column 7, line 8 – column 8, line 12). Sonoyama further discloses that the plurality of thresholds and associated graphical indicators for each field may be arbitrary (for example, see column 9, lines 49-59). Accordingly, it is understood that various thresholds may be associated with a field, such that if the data is less than a first threshold, a first graphical indicator is displayed, and if the data is greater than a second threshold, a second graphical indicator is displayed for the field. Sonoyama, however, doesn’t explicitly disclose that data within the fields of the document is cost data, which is

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associated with tasks of a project, as is expressed in claim 63. Receiving project data having tasks, whereby each task has a cost field, and displaying this cost field, is nevertheless well known in the art. For example, Schanel teaches receiving and displaying project data, the project data having a plurality of tasks and associated cost fields (for example, see figure 2, and column 13, lines 16-62). It would have therefore been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Sonoyama and Schanel before him at the time the invention was made implement the document output apparatus taught by Sonoyama to display project task and cost data, like done by Schanel. It would have been advantageous to one of ordinary skill to utilize this combination because such data is useful for organizational analysis, as is taught by Schanel (for example, see column 1, lines 25-54). The resulting document output apparatus taught by Sonoyama and Schanel would thus be more widely used. As described above, it is understood that various thresholds may be associated with a field, such that if the data is less than a first threshold, a first graphical indicator is displayed, and if the data is greater than a second threshold, a second graphical indicator is displayed for the field. As associated with a cost field, this first threshold and first graphical indicator are considered an "under budget threshold" and an "under budget graphical indicator," respectively, and this second threshold and second graphical indicator are considered an "over budget threshold" and an "over budget graphical indicator," respectively. Sonoyama and Schanel thus teach a method like that recited in claim 63, the method comprising: receiving a project having tasks, each task having a cost field; receiving from the user a display option indicating whether to display only text data or text data and graphical indicators for the cost field of a task; receiving from the user an under budget threshold, an under budget graphical indicator, an over budget threshold, and an over budget

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graphical indicator for data contained in the cost field of the task; and when processing the cost field for a task, determining whether the display option indicates displaying graphical indicators or text data only for the cost field of the task; and when the display option indicates to display only text data, displaying only text data for the cost field; and when the display option indicates to display graphical indicators also, when the cost field is less than the under budget threshold, displaying the under budget graphical indicator; and when the cost field is greater than the over budget threshold, displaying the over budget graphical indicator.

Regarding claim 61, Sonoyama teaches that the above-described document output apparatus may be implemented via a program on a storage medium (for example, see column 3, line 21 – column 4, line 20). Such a storage medium implementing the above-described document output apparatus of Sonoyama and Schanel is considered a “computer-readable medium,” like that recited in claim 61.

Concerning claim 64, Sonoyama teaches that the above-described document output apparatus may be implemented via a computer (for example, see column 3, line 9 – column 4, line 26). Such a computer implementing the above-described document output apparatus of Sonoyama and Schanel is considered a “project information management system,” like that recited in claim 64.

Concerning claims 53 and 65, Sonoyama discloses that, when displaying graphical indicators within a document, the fields of the document are processed in a particular order to determine whether or not to display a graphical indicator for each field (for example, see column 7, lines 8-55). As some fields are processed before others, this processing (i.e. the claimed determining and displaying) is considered to be performed in a prioritized order.

As per claims 54 and 66, Sonoyama demonstrates that, when it is determined that a cell value does not satisfy any of the thresholds, only the cell value and no graphical indicators are displayed within the cell (for example, see figures 4B and 9; and see column 7, line 61 – column 8, line 12). As described above, Schanel further teaches that such a cell value may correspond to project cost information.

In regard to claims 55 and 67, Sonoyama demonstrates that graphical indicators are selected to be displayed within a document by activating a “color dictionary change” menu (for example, see column 8, lines 13-63). Such graphical indicators are therefore considered pre-defined.

Regarding claims 56 and 68, Schanel teaches that project cost information may be displayed within one or more fields of a document, as is described above. Such project cost information, being a characteristic of a project task, is considered an attribute of the project.

In reference to claims 57 and 69, Sonoyama and Schanel teach a document output apparatus by which cells of a document may be colored according to the values within the cells, as is described above. Sonoyama particularly teaches that the user may activate a menu to select from various “color dictionaries,” each denoting a specific association between particular thresholds and corresponding graphical indicators, i.e. cell colors (for example, see column 8, lines 13-63; and column 4, line 63 – column 6, line 4). As demonstrated by the color dictionaries of figures 4A-4B and 5A-5B, such color dictionaries comprise tests for using in a condition. As the color dictionaries are predefined, these tests are considered predefined, like recited in claim 57. Accordingly, Sonoyama and Schanel teach that the thresholds and graphical indicators may be received via a user interface that provides pre-defined tests for use in a condition.

Claims 58-60 and 70-72 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Sonoyama and Schanel, which is described above, and also over U.S. Patent No. 5,918,238, which is attributed to Hayashi. As described above, Sonoyama and Schanel teach a document output apparatus by which cells of a document may be colored according to the values within the cells. Sonoyama particularly teaches that the user may activate a menu to select from various “color dictionaries,” each denoting a specific association between particular thresholds and corresponding graphical indicators, i.e. cell colors (for example, see column 8, lines 13-63; and column 4, line 63 – color 6, line 4). Sonoyama and Schanel further teach that the cell data may include summary data and more specifically, project summary data (for example, see figure 9 of Sonoyama: the “semiannual total” column and the “monthly total” row are each considered summary data; and see column 13, line 53 – column 14, line 42; column 16, lines 5-30; and figure 12 of Hayashi: a document may include data accumulated from a plurality of project fields.) The color dictionaries may denote that particular thresholds apply to particular data fields or types of data (for example, see the color dictionaries of figures 4A-4B and 5A-5B). Neither Sonoyama nor Schanel, however, explicitly teach that the user can create such a color dictionary, and thus, Sonoyama and Schanel fail to teach that *the user* can specify whether the thresholds apply to project summary or non summary data, as is expressed in claims 58-59 and 70-71. Accordingly, this combination further fails to explicitly teach receiving an indication as to whether summary data inherits the same threshold as non summary data, as is expressed in claims 60 and 72.

Like Sonoyama and Schanel, Hayashi presents a system whereby each cell of a document is graphically indicated based on the value of the data within the cell (for example, column 3, line 55 – column 4, line 37). Further like Sonoyama, Hayashi teaches that a color dictionary, referred to as a “cell value-color correspondence table,” may be applied to associate various thresholds with particular graphical indicators (for example, see column 5, line 50 – column 6, line 31). Specifically regarding the claimed invention, Hayashi discloses that the user may adjust the color dictionary via the user interface (for example, see column 9, lines 45-62).

It would therefore have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Sonoyama, Schanel, and Hayashi before him at the time the invention was made to modify the user interface of Sonoyama and Schanel such that it may be used to change the particulars of color dictionaries, like taught by Hayashi. It would have been advantageous to one of ordinary skill to utilize this combination, because the user would be able to color cells of a document according to his or her tastes, as is demonstrated by Hayashi. Therefore, since Sonoyama, Schanel, and Hayashi teach that the user can adjust a color dictionary, and since the color dictionary may denote that particular thresholds apply to particular data fields, and since such data fields may be project summary or non summary data fields, it is understood that the user may specify through the user interface whether particular thresholds apply to summary or non summary data, and whether the summary data inherits the same threshold as non summary data.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 62 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 1st and 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

The prior art (for example, U.S. Patent No. 6,349,315, to Sonoyama et al. or U.S. Patent No. 5,918,238 to Hayashi) teaches specifying various thresholds and associated graphical indicators, such that data within a document that exists in a pre-determined relationship with the threshold (e.g. is greater than, is less than, or is equal to the threshold) is indicated by the graphical indicators (i.e. is colored according to the graphical indicators). Additionally, the prior art (for example, U.S. Patent No. 6,323,885 to Wiese) teaches displaying only the graphical indicator, and not the data, for data that exists in the pre-determined relationship with the thresholds. Moreover, the prior art (U.S. Patent No. 5,704,028 to Schanel et al.) teaches that such data, having corresponding graphical indicators, may include project data having tasks and subtasks, each task and subtask having a cost field, which may display a non-summary cost or a summary cost. Accordingly, the prior art is considered to teach, to one of ordinary skill in the art: providing a project having tasks and subtasks, each task and subtask having a cost field with project cost information; for each task and subtask, receiving from a user a display option indicating whether to display text data or graphical indicators for the cost field; and receiving from the user summary thresholds (e.g. a summary under budget threshold, a summary over budget threshold) and corresponding graphical indicators; receiving from the user non-summary thresholds (e.g. a non-summary under budget threshold, a non-summary over budget graphical threshold) and corresponding graphical indicators, like recited in claim 62. The prior art,

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however, does not explicitly disclose that the received thresholds and graphical indicators can be different for each task and subtask, as is recited in claim 62.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

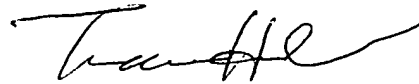
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Blaine Basom whose telephone number is (571) 272-4044. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, from 8:30 am to 5:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kristine Kincaid can be reached on (571) 272-4063. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

btb
5/30/2006



TADESSE HAILU
Patent Examiner